



**CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA**  
**DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE**

**Cllr Rob Stewart**  
**Chair of Swansea Public Services**  
**Board**

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**17 October 2017**

**Summary:** This is a letter from the Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Chair of the Public Services Board following the meeting of the Panel on 30 August 2017. It is about the Wellbeing Assessment and Wellbeing Plan.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

The Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel met for the first time this municipal year on 30 August. This letter provides you and the PSB with feedback from our meeting.

### **Wellbeing Assessment**

The Panel received a presentation from Steve King on the Wellbeing Assessment. We understand that the assessment is an evolving document which will be updated annually but we did have some questions relating to some of the current information contained within it.

1. Driver C2 (Good job opportunities are created) - we heard that Swansea's productivity gap is narrowing but more needs to be done to create 'good jobs'. Can you clarify what the PSB defines as a 'good job'?
2. Driver D1 (People meet the Minimum Income Standard) - the Assessment notes that 'most people in Swansea are not in income poverty' but at the same time Driver C2 states that 'workplace earnings are significantly lower' than the UK average. This seems to create

some confusion. Can you clarify if 'income' includes unearned income such as benefits or whether the term only relates to wages?

3. Furthermore, the Panel was trying to establish whether the more affluent areas of Swansea are creating an offset with the more deprived areas. If this is the case, although the statistic as an average would be correct, it would not show an accurate picture of income poverty within Swansea.

Panel Members remarked at the scores (out of ten) attached to each of the primary drivers and questioned their meaningfulness. They noted that scores were generally low, which called for big action to improve things.

The Wellbeing Assessment is meant to provide the evidence base to help the PSB to develop an effective Wellbeing Plan and objectives, so it is important that the assessment provides a clear message to decision-makers to inform key actions.

### **Wellbeing Plan**

The Panel received a presentation from Chris Sivers on the development of the Wellbeing Plan. The Panel is glad to see there is progress being made. We are keen to see measurable action, informed by the Wellbeing Assessment, which can be monitored by the Panel. We expect to see clear targets so that we can assess achievement and the difference made by the PSB for citizens.

The Panel has a number of comments to make on the Plan:

1. The Panel appreciates that it is not feasible to include everybody as a consultee but we notice that schools are not stakeholders. We feel that it would be beneficial for schools to receive the educational objectives and be able to comment on these
2. There is some concern from the Panel around the accessibility of the information about the Plan for public consultation. There should be a clear communications plan. The Panel recommends that any information for public consultation is written in plain English and provided in accessible formats. This will make the engagement much more meaningful and successful.
3. We noted the timetable for developing the Plan. It is essential that a scrutiny stage, as a statutory consultee, is included prior to sign off. We have a meeting on 13 December at which we could consider the Plan.

### **Scrutiny Work Plan**

For your information the Panel is planning to review the PSB's achievement against the four objectives which the PSB has been working on for the past

year (Domestic Abuse, Ageing Well, Early Years, and City Centre). We will be inviting in lead officers and project sponsors to meet the Panel to help us understand progress and the difference made.

Finally, the Panel considered your response to our previous letter. With regard to the ending of Communities First, which we felt should be discussed by the PSB to mitigate potential impact, you wrote that you were asking the Planning Group to consider the transition plans the Council has in place. Could you clarify what those plans are? We would like to know whether there have been any developments over the last few months and how the voluntary sector has been involved in any discussions.

### **Your Response**

In your response we would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter. We would be grateful, however, if you could specifically refer to our request for you to:

- provide further information about the primary drivers (C2 and D1);
- develop a communications plans for the Wellbeing Plan consultation;
- confirm that the draft Wellbeing Plan can be presented to our Panel on 13 December for discussion
- update us about PSB discussion concerning the ending of the Communities First Programme, impact and transition.

I would be grateful if you could reply to this letter by 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

We will hope to include both letters in the agenda of the next available scrutiny meeting.

Yours sincerely,



**Councillor Mary Jones**

Convener, Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel

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